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CONSUMER TIME

FAO CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

NETWORK: NBC

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1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE...MONEY IN TILL
2. JOHN: It's CONSUMER TIME!
3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER.
4. ANNCR: During the next fifteen minutes the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations make their facilities available as a public service for the presentation of CONSUMER TIME by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. And here are Mrs. Freyman and Johnny.
Johnny,
5. FREYMAN: This week /the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization is holding a very important meeting...right here in Washington, D. C.
Yes, I know Mrs. Freyman, and I know the
6. JOHN: / F.A.O. called this conference because they're convinced there isn't going to be enough food to feed the people of the world
The meeting is not dealing
...for maybe four or even five years. / with the immediate situation, but with the conditions we will face beginning next fall
and winter.
7. FREYMAN: Right now it looks as if more people will die of /hunger in the starvation
next few years than were killed in all the battles and bombings...of the war
8. JOHN: We have to know how much food is needed...where the food is...
and then figure out the best ways of getting the food to places where the shortages are. That's why F.A.O. called this meeting.

9. FREYMAN: Before the conference began, Johnny and I got Gove Hambidge, Information Director for F.A.O. off in a corner. He told us just which meetings we should look in on...so we could report to our CONSUMER TIME listeners.
10. JOHN: We're very glad Mr. Hambidge can be with us in the studio today... Later on in the program he'll give us the up-to-the-minute news of this special meeting on urgent food problems.
11. FREYMAN: But now, Johnny...let's tell everybody about the hall at the United States Chamber of Commerce Building...where the meetings were held. Didn't you think it was colorful?
12. JOHN: Yes, I thought it was a perfect setting for such an important conference...all those banners...and a big tapestry at each end of the hall.
13. FREYMAN: (REMINISCING) And wasn't that ceiling interesting? Did you notice it had the names of our States on those huge cross beams?
14. JOHN: Uh huh...Latin and English mottoes too.
15. FREYMAN: And then all those delegates from so many far off places like Australia...China...and France...and Brazil.
16. JOHN: It sure was helpful that they had printed signs at each place at those long tables...so we could identify the different delegates. Say, Mrs. Freyman, what did you think of all those flash bulbs popping all over the place?
17. FREYMAN: Well, Johnny, I must admit I jumped every time one went off... at first. (PUTTING IT ON JUST A LITTLE...BUT NOT SERIOUS)
But then I realized that if we're going to move in international circles...why, I'd just have to get used to it.
18. JOHN: Oh you did! Then I suppose you just took those motion picture cameras for granted too?

19. FREYMAN: (SERIOUS) Really, Johnny, when the conference got under way, I didn't pay much attention to the surroundings...though I did notice several women sitting at the delegates' tables...with some smart looking hats incidentally. And I hope you noticed that the head of the United Kingdom delegation was a woman.
20. JOHN: That's Dr. Summerskill, isn't it?
21. FREYMAN: That's right...but Johnny...I wonder if you had the same feeling I did before the conference started?
22. JOHN: What's that, Mrs. Freyman?
23. FREYMAN: Well...I expected a bunch of long speeches. You know. But no one talked very long...and every one had something definite to say.
24. JOHN: Mmmm hmmm. That impressed me too...just as if they were taking their coats off...rolling up their sleeves...and going to work.
25. FREYMAN: That's exactly it. It's even more amazing when you stop to think that there were people there from some twenty different nations...Johnny, were you a little surprised that the people looked just like...people? I mean, people we know...
26. JOHN: I was...kind of. I really don't know what else I expected them to look like. But they dressed just like us. In fact, the conference might have been a meeting of the Kiwanis... or a Rotary Club.
27. FREYMAN: And after Sir John Boyd Orr, the Director-General of F.A.O. opened the meeting, they got right down to business. I thought President Truman's message, which the Secretary of Agriculture read, really showed how important the conference is.

28. MAN: (DIGNIFIED) "What this conference accomplishes or fails to accomplish will make its mark not only in the areas where people are hungry as the aftermath of war, but in all parts of the earth and for a long time to come. Any step toward feeding the world's families better...and making the fullest use of the products of farms and fisheries...is a step toward winning and securing the peace."
29. MUSIC: BRIDGE
30. JOHN: The first piece of business of the F.A.O. meeting was to elect a chairman.
31. FREYMAN: And they elected our own Secretary of Agriculture, Mr. Anderson.
32. JOHN: Then they really got under way. The delegates didn't waste a lot of time talking about the need for food...because they know how important it is. Mrs. Freyman, do you remember what Dr. Belt, the Cuban Ambassador to the United States said?
33. MAN: (SPANISH OVERTONES) Mr. Chairman. Fellow Delegates: Cuba considers that this meeting has not been called to express once again sympathy for the starving people of the world. We have come here to take positive action to satisfy their needs.
34. FREYMAN: Yes...and I thought Mr. Jacobsen had a good point too. You know, Johnny, he's the Agriculture Counselor to the Danish Government.
35. MAN: (SCANDINAVIAN ACCENT) Surely, it is not enough to make sure that sufficient food is available. A very important task is to get it distributed to the various countries and to different classes of population.
36. JOHN: The Chairman of the Polish Delegation, Mr. Zoltowski summed up his country's immense need.

37. MAN: (POLISH ACCENT) In spite of UNRRA deliveries to Poland, we are down right now to a level barely two hundred and eighteen grams of grain per person per day. And I remind you that this ration is in a country where bread constitutes sixty percent of the caloric value of the daily diet. Low as this ration is, on the first of June there will be a grain deficit of ten thousand tons in Poland...even assuming that promised deliveries for May are made to the last ton.

38. FREYMAN: Johnny, that's just tragic, isn't it?

39. JOHN: Certainly is...so is the situation in India. Remember what their delegate said? What was his name?

40. FREYMAN: It's spelled R-A-O...and I think it's pronounced "Rowe"...
Dr. Rowe.

41. MAN: (SLIGHT BRITISH ACCENT) We have used up most of our domestic resources. Our stocks, in the course of the next few weeks, will have reached the most dangerous levels that no rationing administration, covering an area as large as my country, and a people so many in number as one-hundred million, can contemplate without a certain fear of a universal breakdown...I do not know what is going to be the fate of the people of my country. I do not want to think about it.

42. MUSIC: BRIDGE

43. JOHN: After all the delegates made their statements, they started in on their committee work.

44. FREYMAN: There were three committees...weren't there, Johnny?

45. JOHN: That's right. The first committee is to draw up plans for the entire world's production of food. The second committee's job is to plan the best way to distribute the food. And the third committee was to recommend some kind of an organization that will be a world distribution agency.

46. FREYMAN: Well, I'm certainly glad I'm not on any of those committees. They really have some mighty important decisions to make... and there are lots of different ideas as to how it all should be done.
47. JOHN: Yes, but, all the delegates agree that we have to have some kind of an international organization to ^{replace the Combined} Food Board in taking care of the allocation of ^{the} world's food supply.
48. FREYMAN: They're making plans for after the coming harvest, aren't they, Johnny?
49. JOHN: That's right. And the prospects aren't any too bright even after the harvest. Even now, it looks like there'll be a critical world food shortage...at least until the 1947 harvest is in. That of course, is if the weather is average, or even better than average for all this year and next.
50. FREYMAN: And we all know the weather doesn't always live up to our hopes for it.
51. JOHN: So...this isn't a "ninety-day" crisis. It'll be a long time before we lick starvation.
52. FREYMAN: That's why Secretary of Agriculture Anderson stressed the importance of grain at the conference. He called it the key food in the international distribution of food.
53. MAN: (DIGNIFIED) "While famine stalked the world, nothing would fill the stomachs of hungry people as quickly, as adequately, and as cheaply as grain. The food measure descended from the level of vitamins and health to the level of calories and survival."
54. JOHN: F.A.O.'s nutritionists say that Europeans must have a minimum of nineteen hundred calories a day to live.

55. FREYMAN: That isn't much...especially when you compare it to over three thousand calories...which is what we Americans average every day.
56. JOHN: But nineteen hundred calories will prevent the most serious malnutrition...and the danger of food riots. And it's more than the nine hundred calories which is all some people get every day...in some parts of Europe.
57. FREYMAN: Didn't the experts say, though, that the people in the Eastern and tropical countries can survive with fifteen to sixteen hundred calories a day?
58. JOHN: Yes they did. That's because on the average...the people are smaller in these countries. The climate and other things have something to do with it, too.
59. FREYMAN: But just keeping people alive isn't enough. You can't expect men and women to work at their jobs efficiently until they get more food.
60. JOHN: Especially protein food, Mrs. Freyman. More proteins mean the children will grow better. There'll be an improvement in the general health of all the people...and so naturally they'll be able to help themselves.
61. FREYMAN: Johnny, there seems to be so many problems that F.A.O. has to solve.
62. JOHN: Unfortunately that's very true, Mrs. Freyman. The war has ruined the food production in so many large parts of the world. And in other places, agriculture never has been very well developed...or there is so much poverty that the people can't afford the best production methods.
63. FREYMAN: Then I suppose these poverty-stricken countries need just as much help in improving their agriculture as the war-devastated countries.

64. JOHN: Indeed they do. But up to this point the spotlight has been on the liberated nations. Naturally with starvation staring them in the face, they've been very anxious to reestablish their agriculture...rehabilitate their farms, you might say.
65. FREYMAN: And so they've asked for seed, fertilizer, farm machinery and livestock.
66. JOHN: Yes...and food processing equipment, boats and gear for fishing, as well as tools and equipment for forestry. And along with all this, they need the advice and services of skilled technicians.
67. FREYMAN: Well, they're going to get that advice from F.A.O.'s experts, aren't they, Johnny?
68. JOHN: That's the plan. And so will the underdeveloped countries... that's very important if the world's going to produce just as much food as it can.
69. FREYMAN: Johnny, when we talk about the world producing all the food it can...how are we going to avoid that ugly word..."surplus"?
70. JOHN: Well, maybe this is a good place to call on Mr. Hambidge, the Director of Information for the Food and Agriculture Organization. I'll pass the buck to you, Mr. Hambidge... how are we going to avoid the world "surplus"?
71. HAMBIDGE: We're just going to say it. F.A.O. isn't closing its eyes to the fact that stockpiles can be built up and suddenly there's no market for the food. Then the prices fall sharply, and the farmers are ruined.
72. JOHN: That's exactly what happened after the first World war, isn't it?
73. HAMBIDGE: Absolutely. And if farmers are afraid that the price will crash far below production costs, they'll naturally try to avoid producing more than they can sell.

74. JOHN: Then surpluses are another big problem this meeting has had to consider. They're questions that directly affect every consumer in every country.
75. HAMBIDGE: Right, they do just that...Now...first of all, let me say a little about the Combined Food Board. The Combined Food Board is a wartime agency set up to allocate supplies, mostly basic foodstuffs...scarce foods, that is...among the countries that need them. The Board has three members...the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada.
76. JOHN: Hasn't there been a good deal of criticism of the Board on the ground that it is run by only three nations?
77. HAMBIDGE: Yes, for that reason, and others. But remember the Combined Food Board was set up to do a wartime job...not a peacetime job. It did a good job during the war.
78. FREYMAN: And it is supposed to go out of existence at the end of this year, isn't it? Which will leave no agency to allocate foods...although they'll still be scarce?
79. HAMBIDGE: Exactly. Now Committee Three at this conference has been tackling the problem of what to do about that. The Committee will recommend, I believe...first, an emergency organization to take the place of the Combined Food Board and run until at least the end of next year...or longer if a scarcity of basic foods make that necessary. Next, this organization will have a much larger membership than the old Combined Food Board...over 20 nations instead of three. Finally, the new organization will work closely with UNRRA and with FAO...and it will get an international technical staff, or secretariat, as far as possible from FAO.

80. JOHN: That sounds pretty good. It means that many more nations, on both the producing and the receiving ends, will have a real say in the operations of the new agency...which is in line with democratic principles. By the way, what will it be called?
81. HAMBIDGE: The International Emergency Food Council...IEFC for short.
82. FREYMAN: And how about long-term international food policies, Mr. Hambidge...that business of surpluses...what's being done about that?
83. HAMBIDGE: Well, when I left the meeting of Committee Three a few minutes ago, they were considering a recommendation which I think will result in due course in effective action to take care of that problem...not by cutting down production, as we did in the great depression, but by getting foods used, at fair prices to farmers, to meet human needs.
84. FREYMAN: So in dealing with the emergency problem...this conference may be said also, to be taking another step toward Freedom from Want.
85. HAMBIDGE: I think that can decidedly be said...I for one feel that this meeting called by FAO marks a big forward step.
86. JOHN: Thank you, so much, Mr. Hambidge, for taking time away from the FAO meeting on urgent food problems to be with us today. CONSUMER TIME will be watching the work of FAO with interest.
87. JOHN: What's happening next week on CONSUMER TIME, Mrs. Freyman?
88. FREYMAN: Next week, Johnny, we're going to talk about canning your Victory Garden. It's none too early, you know, to get your canning budget down on paper. We'll have some advice on how to take care of your pressure canner...and what the prospects are for new canning equipment. Also news about glass jars, rubber rings, and a free, how-to-do-it booklet on home canning.

89. JOHN: So be with us then for another edition of....

90. SOUND: CASH REGISTER....

91. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME!

92. SOUND: CASH REGISTER....CLOSE DRAWER.

93. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME, written by Eleanor Miller, and directed by Frederick Schweikher, is presented by the U. S. Department of Agriculture through the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations. It comes to you from Washington, D. C.

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